



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

EU report highlights restrictions on Tibetan culture, access

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BRUSSELS—In its 2021 Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World, released on April 19, the European Union has highlighted the further worsening of the overall human rights situation in China and the continuing repressive policies of the Chinese government in Tibet.

The report, which is prepared annually by the European External Action Service and provides an overview of EU activities to promote and protect human rights and democracy across the globe, summarizes the main issues regarding human rights in China, including the limitation of civil society space, the restrictions on media freedom and access to information, as well as the use of enforced disappearances, secret detentions and torture.

It also notes that religious activities continued to take place under the supervision of the Chinese Communist Party and emphasizes the Chinese government’s violations of the rights of Uyghurs, Tibetans and Inner Mongolians, as well as the “severe democratic setback” in Hong Kong.

Tibet

On Tibet, the EU notes that the Chinese government continued to implement similar policies as those implemented in Xinjiang, severely limiting Tibetan culture, language and identity.

“Religious practices continue to be heavily controlled by the [Communist Party of China], in line with existing regulations,” the report states. “Detentions, torture and deaths in prison of Tibetan monks and rights activists continued to be reported. Private language schools teaching in Tibetan were closed or asked to start teaching in Mandarin. In July 2021, authorities announced that kindergartens in ethnic minority areas must use Mandarin as teaching language.”

The report also recalls the lack of access to the Tibet Autonomous Region, which “was possible only for controlled visits of official delegations or tourist groups.”

EU action

The report further summarizes the efforts undertaken by the European Union to advance human rights in China. This includes the sanctions taken against four Chinese individuals (including the now-Tibet Autonomous Region secretary Wang Junzheng) and one entity for their involvement in serious human rights violations in Xinjiang, and the continuous calls to China to fulfill its obligations under the UN Charter and international law, as well as under its own constitution.

Report of the European Parliament on the persecution of minorities

On April 4, another report on the persecution of minorities on the grounds of belief or religion was also adopted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament.

While not referring to any specific country, the report condemns, among others, the use of legislation on security, sedition, disturbance of public order, and the fight against terrorism and extremism as a tool to

criminalize persons belonging to belief or religious minorities, restrict the practice or expression of their belief or religion or close places of worships.

In recent years, national security has increasingly been used as a pretext to crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism, and the Dalai Lama has been labelled a security threat.

Members of the European Parliament also strongly condemn any practice of coercive detention in state-run re-education camps, forced labor or exploitation of persons belonging to belief or religious minorities, where “the objectives include compelling them to abandon their religion and assimilate to the dominant culture, language or ways of thinking.”



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